

Cure Launches First National Index Revealing What it Takes to Turn Science into Cures

Success factors go beyond funding, publications and patents to identify the top 303 U.S. Research Institutions making real-world impact

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, April 29, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Cure, the premier [healthcare](#) innovation ecosystem, today announced the launch of the Cure Innovation Index, the first data-driven framework to measure how effectively U.S. biomedical institutions translate scientific discovery into real-world healthcare solutions and treatments.

“The Index sets a new standard for measuring [translational performance](#) across the U.S. [biomedical research](#) ecosystem, one that reflects its real and potential positive impact on patients, the healthcare system and the broader economy,” said Seema Kumar, CEO of Cure. “Unlike traditional metrics, which focus on individual outputs, the Cure Innovation Index evaluates the full set of factors required to move innovation from discovery to early research to clinical and commercial impact.”

The Index ranks the top 303 academic institutions, selected from more than 6,000 nationwide, and represents all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. The Index also provides peer-benchmarked comparisons and customized improvement recommendations, making translational performance visible, comparable, and actionable.

The U.S. biomedical research ecosystem, anchored by academic institutions, has been a



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powerful engine of innovation, contributing to the development of life-saving therapies and the creation of thousands of companies, millions of jobs, and trillions of dollars in economic impact over time. However, academic performance is traditionally evaluated by funding levels and discrete measures such as publications and patents rather than the ability to translate discoveries into real-world impact.

A NEW STANDARD FOR MEASURING TRANSLATIONAL PERFORMANCE

The Cure Innovation Index is built on a proprietary methodology that evaluates 25 indicators across three core domains:

- * Research Capabilities
- * Entrepreneurial Readiness
- * Market Translation

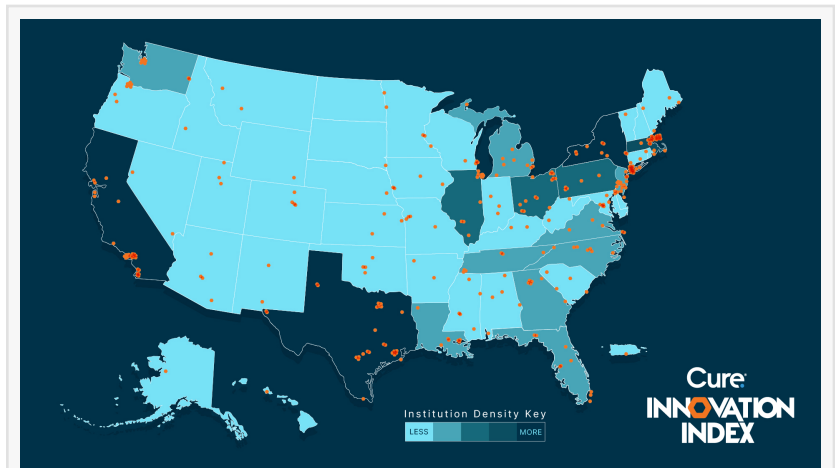
Together, these domains capture the structural, operational, and cultural factors that enable institutions to consistently and reliably convert scientific breakthroughs into therapies, companies, and measurable health impacts.

“The Cure Innovation Index reflects a fundamental shift in how we define success in biomedical research,” said Thomas P. Sakmar, MD, the Richard M. and Isabel P. Furlaud Professor and Senior Physician at The Rockefeller University, who serves as an integral member of the Cure Innovation Index team. “Scientific excellence alone is not enough. Institutions must build the infrastructure, partnerships, and culture required to translate innovation into outcomes that benefit patients.”

TOP-PERFORMING BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS ACROSS THE U.S.

The 2026 Cure Innovation Index ranks universities separately from institutes and centers to reflect differences in their structures and missions. The complete Index rankings reveal a consistent pattern: institutions that lead in translational performance combine scientific excellence with strong commercialization infrastructure, deep industry engagement, and an embedded entrepreneurial culture.

The rankings identified:



The Cure Innovation Index sets a new standard for identifying the top U.S. universities, institutes, and centers moving discoveries to healthcare solutions, making translational performance visible, comparable, and actionable

Top Five Universities of 243 ranked by the Index:

1. Harvard University
2. Stanford University
3. University of Pennsylvania
4. Massachusetts Institute of Technology
5. University of California, San Francisco

Top Five Institutes and Centers of 60 ranked by the Index:

1. Mass General Brigham
2. Mayo Clinic
3. Scripps Research Institute
4. Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center
5. Dana-Farber Cancer Institute

20 Institutions “Punching Above Their Weight”

The Index also identifies 20 institutions that outperform expectations given their funding levels, demonstrating that translational success is driven not only by resources but also by strategy, culture, and execution.

Top Five “Punching Above Their Weight” Institutions of 20 ranked by the Index:

1. Indiana University, Indianapolis
2. New York Medical College
3. University of Maryland, Baltimore County
4. University of Memphis
5. Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

FROM RANKINGS TO ACTIONABLE INTELLIGENCE: THE CURE INNOVATION INDEX PLATFORM

Beyond rankings, the Cure Innovation Index powers a data platform that provides institution-specific diagnostics, peer benchmarking, gap analysis, insights, strategic recommendations, and intuitive interactive data visualizations, enabling:

- * Benchmarks of performance against peer institutions across various criteria
- * Identification of translational strengths and gaps across key capabilities
- * Prioritization of targeted actions to improve outcomes

The platform is designed to help institutional leadership with strategic decision-making and investment insights. Faculty and campus entrepreneurs receive key recommendations and resources to accelerate progress from discovery to real-world impact.

“The Cure Innovation Index not only measures translational research performance, but equips institutions with the tools, insights, and resources needed to continuously improve,” Kumar noted.

WHY TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH MATTERS NOW

The launch of the Index comes at a critical moment for the U.S. biomedical ecosystem. Increasing emphasis on commercialization from federal agencies, heightened post-pandemic scrutiny, and intensifying global competition have shifted focus from discovery alone to measurable real-world outcomes.

The Cure Innovation Index provides a new lens for understanding how institutions make impact, showcases what best practices look like, and informs improvement areas. These actionable data and insights help institutions strengthen their ability to translate science into scalable healthcare solutions and sustain biomedical innovation leadership.

ABOUT THE CURE INNOVATION INDEX METHODOLOGY

Led by Cure, the effort to develop the Index included a collaborative team of internal and external subject matter experts from academia, industry, government, and Deerfield Intelligence, a division of Deerfield Management Company, an affiliate of Cure.

The multi-dimensional methodology of the Index uses validated data that is integrated from more than a dozen federal and commercial databases. These public sources include the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education; ClinicalTrials.gov; Higher Education Research and Development (HERD) Survey; the Howard Hughes Medical Institute; the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine; National Institutes of Health; National Science Foundation; and major scientific awards databases. The Index also sourced data from Dimensions, an inter-linked research information system provided by Digital Science.

The Index additionally uses original data from surveys of more than 3,000 researchers and industry leaders and from institutional audits to assess their infrastructure and capabilities, including laboratory technologies, technology transfer operations, and educational curricula.

The Index evaluates 25 indicators across 10 subdomains within the three core domains, rolling all into a proprietary calculation of the composite Cure Innovation Index score. The Index’s methodology is described in an article and has been submitted for publication in a peer review journal.

Cure is the premier healthcare innovation ecosystem that provides knowledge, infrastructure and tools to accelerate progress toward cures. Innovate with Cure at wewillcure.com.

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